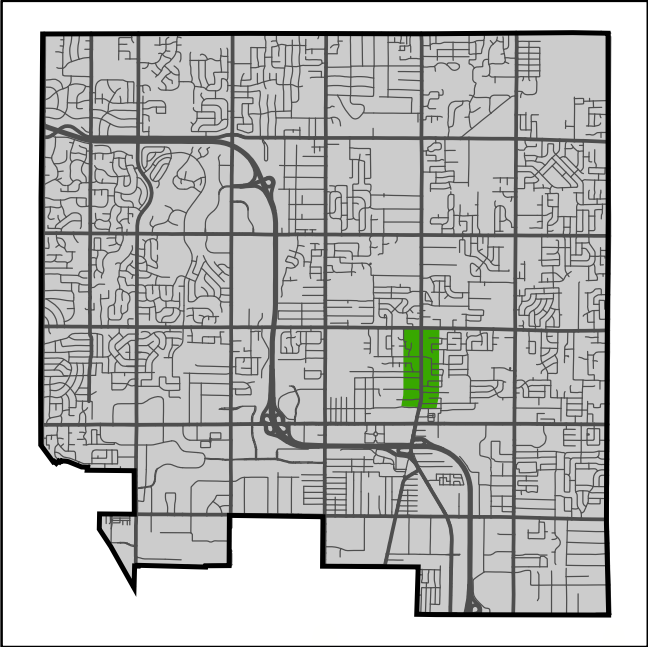


Rochester Road

Special Area Plan





Right: Locator map
Below: Target Area map

Introduction

The Rochester Road corridor is a major north-south thoroughfare traversing Oakland County, with convenient access to I-75, M-59, Big Beaver Road, Maple Road, and Stephenson Highway. Recent road improvements and the creation of a boulevard have improved traffic flow along the corridor but the vision of a green corridor as envisioned in the 2008 Master Plan has not yet been realized. Development along the corridor has been inconsistent with variation in the size and location of buildings. Other challenges include the location of parking areas, outdated façades and nondescript architecture, landscaping, lighting, and signage. The goal of this Plan is to provide a unifying framework built around public and private improvements that will change the function and character of the corridor over time. Rochester Road has the potential to become a hub for small businesses, independent restaurants, neighborhood services, and live-work development.

Evolving to Meet New Challenges

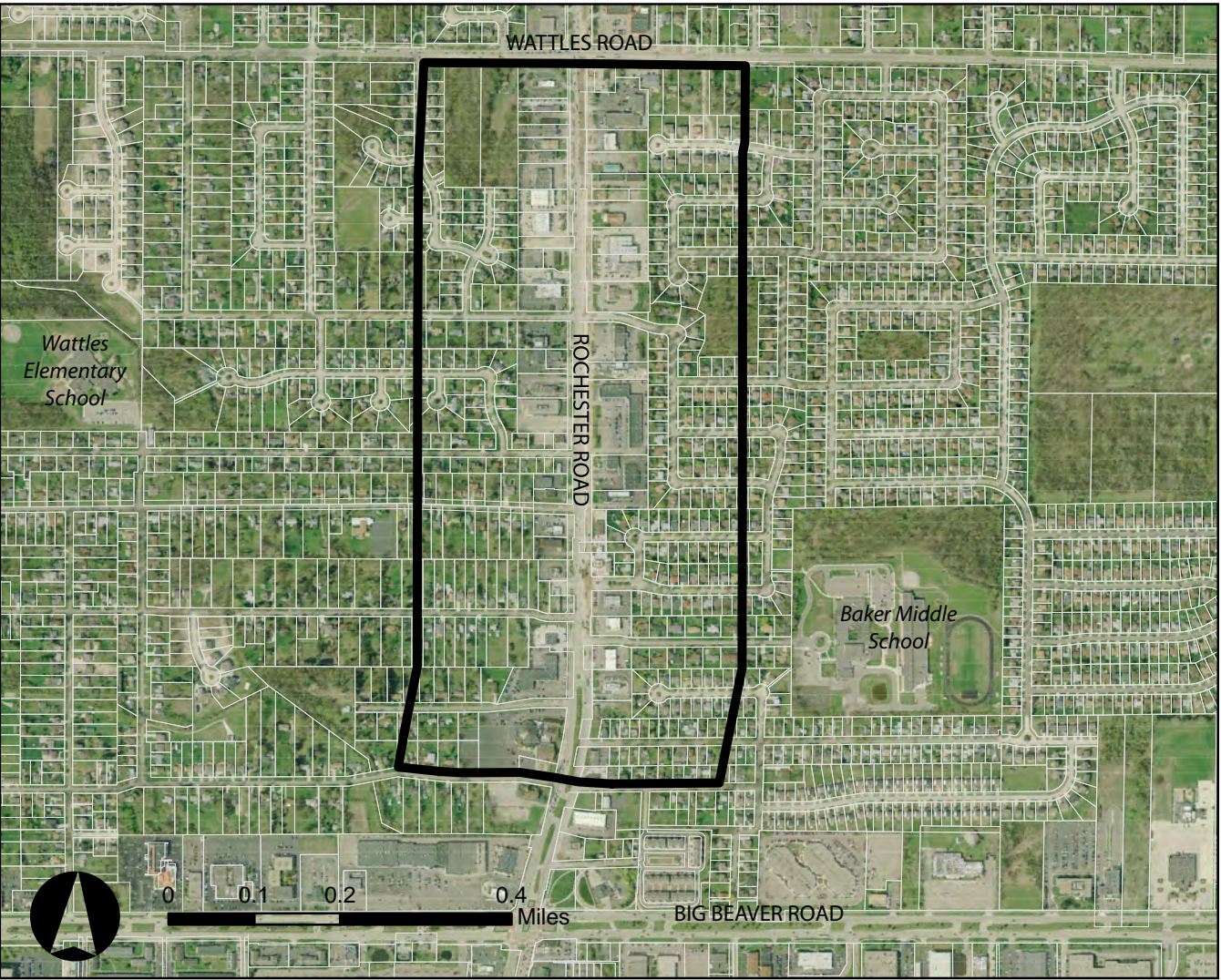
Rochester Road offers a convenient local commercial node close to the Big Beaver corridor. Adjacent to attractive neighborhoods of primarily single family homes in a great school district; it is principally service and retail use. The challenge for Rochester Road is to develop an active, aesthetically pleasing, commercial corridor that will attract customers, increase taxable value, provide and grow the Troy economy, while protecting the adjacent residential neighborhoods.

In general, Rochester Road has a split personality. In terms of traffic, commuters are trying to get through the area as fast as possible, while residents and businesses are calling for a much slower pace that will provide a safe, pedestrian friendly environment. The new boulevard has improved traffic; however it is only the first step in effectively addressing the pedestrian realm and access management. Continued public/private investment will be needed to transform the corridor. In terms of development, real estate professionals reiterate that “density is key” for corridor revitalization, while residents push to maintain height restrictions. The area is dominated by shallow, narrow lots with limited pedestrian access and inconsistent setbacks. Most users agree that excessive signage and inconsistent façade design result in the perception of visual clutter.

Development along the corridor has been uneven with tremendous variation in the size and scope, location of parking areas and roadway access, architecture, landscaping, lighting and signage. The goal of this Plan is to provide a unifying framework built around public and private improvements that will change the function and character of the corridor over time. The plan identifies three complementary concepts for dealing with these issues and creating a solution that all users will welcome. The first concept deals with restructuring the pattern of land use and development lining the corridor, the second involves incorporating the redesign of the public right-of-way, and finally, creating a cohesive image and stronger identity for the corridor.

Vision Statement

Rochester Road will be a welcoming, pedestrian friendly neighborhood shopping destination known for its small business incubation and stormwater management best practices. Green infrastructure, landscaping, and streetscaping enhance the character of the corridor, while also providing a buffer between commercial areas and adjacent residential uses.



Existing Conditions

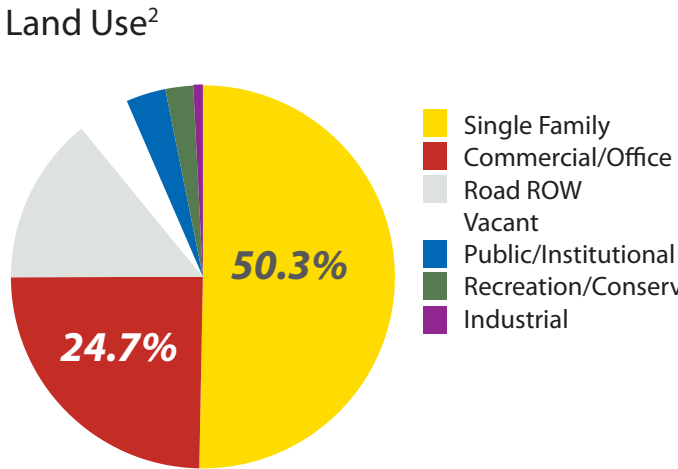


2013 Target area statistics

Total taxable value	\$43,612,770
Total area (acres)	164
Total businesses	131
Total employees	1,037

2010 Market area statistics ¹

Population	9,651
Households	3,321
Percent owner occupied	81.4 %
Median household income	\$86,712
Per capita income	\$34,928



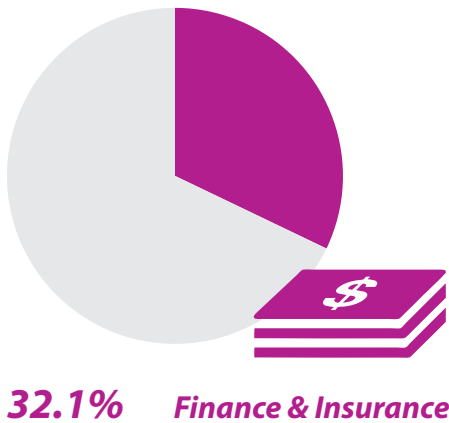
Source: Esri 2013 Estimates Business Summary from Oakland County EDCA, Census 2010, City of Troy GIS data 2013 Note: 1. Market Area includes households within 1 mile of Target Area. 2. Employee and Business data use NAICS codes. 2. Land Use calculations include all parcels within the Target Area.

Property Data

	Target Area	Commercial	Industrial	Residential
Total Parcels	392	57	1	334
Total Structures	376	53	1	322
Total Acres	164	50	1	113
Median Year Structure Built		1982	NA	1976
Total Floor Area (SF)		379,321	NA	601,131
Median Floor Area (SF)		4,800	NA	1,709
Total Taxable Value	\$ 43,612,770	\$ 14,911,860	NA	\$ 28,700,910

Source: City of Troy GIS data 2013

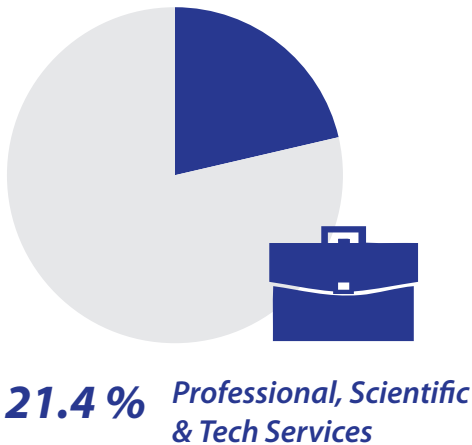
Top Industries in Target Area by Employment ²



	Employees	Percent (%)
Finance & Insurance	333	32.1
Administrative & Support & Waste Management	135	13.0
Accommodation & Food Services	124	12.0
Retail Trade	109	10.5
Professional, Scientific & Tech Services	83	8.0

Source: Esri 2013 Estimates Business Summary from Oakland County EDCA

Top Industries in Target Area by Number of Businesses



	Businesses	Percent (%)
Professional, Scientific & Tech Services	28	21.4
Administrative & Support & Waste Management	22	16.8
Retail Trade	15	11.5
Other Services (except Public Administration)	11	8.4
Health Care & Social Assistance	10	7.6

Source: Esri 2013 Estimates Business Summary from Oakland County EDCA

Existing Conditions

Gateways

- Wattles Road
- Big Beaver Road

Assets

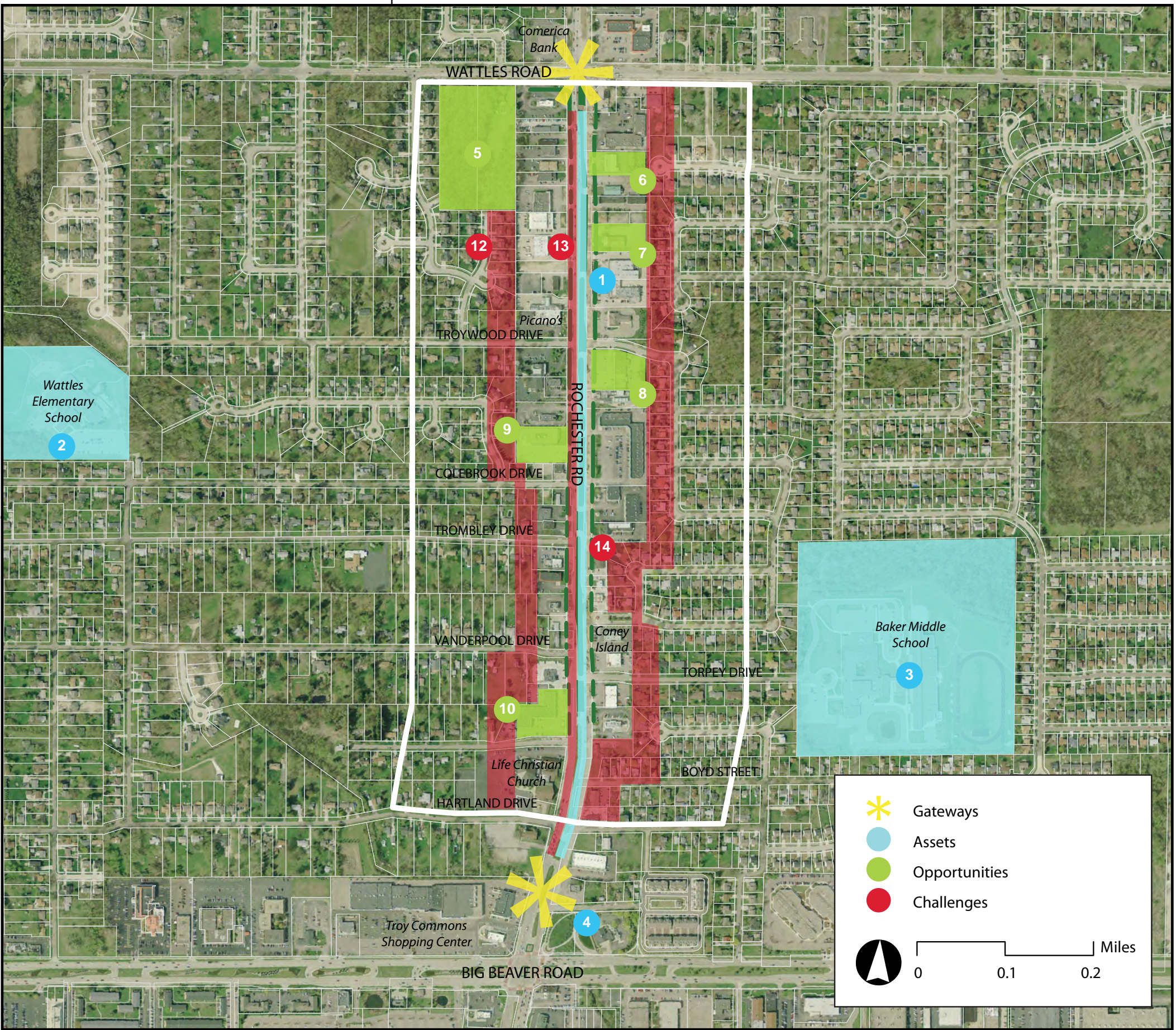
1. Rochester Road street improvements
2. Wattles Elementary School
3. Baker Middle School
4. Gateway Park on Big Beaver Road

Opportunities

5. Potential development site
6. Recent redevelopment
7. Potential development site
8. SE of Rochester Rd and Troywood Drive
9. NW of Rochester Rd and Colebrook Drive
10. Troy Pointe Plaza
11. Mom and Pop character

Challenges

12. Boundary/transition between single-family residential Boundary/transition between single-family residential
13. Inconsistent building setback
14. Shallow depth of commercial frontage



✱ Gateways

● Assets

● Opportunities

● Challenges



0 0.1 0.2 Miles

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Rochester Road Public Engagement Findings

Rochester Road offers a convenient economic node close to residential neighborhoods. It is primarily service and retail use. The corridor could be marketed as the “Entrepreneurial Center” for the city as it provides an incubator for small start-up businesses. The area is dominated by shallow, narrow lots with limited pedestrian access and inconsistent setbacks. Excessive signage and inconsistent façade design result in the perception of visual clutter. New development may require the consolidation of parcels, but there are concerns from the community about increasing building heights where adjacent to residential properties.

There needs to be a conscious effort in branding Rochester Road and making it a notable place. Streetscape should not be underestimated. Sidewalk connections and pedestrian access must be accommodated in new developments. In some ways infrastructure can be used to mask the visual clutter and give the corridor a unified image.

Considerations

- Keep integrity of residential as more commercial frontage is developed
- Reface retail and create more pedestrian friendly intersections
- Clean corridor and remove or revitalize obsolete buildings by finding incentives for redevelopment
- Reduce setbacks and parking associated with strip malls
- Develop retail and restaurants that reflect the needs of nearby residents
- Encourage senior housing and compatible uses

Priorities and Strategies

This plan recommends three priorities for establishing Rochester Road as a vibrant and walkable corridor with ample pedestrian amenities, convenient neighborhood services, and great accessibility. These priorities and strategies include:

1. Enhance the image and identity through private investment and public/private partnerships

Strategies:

- Adopt Design Guidelines/Standards
- Establish building improvement programs
- Coordinate streetscape improvements
- Encourage innovative stormwater management

2. Improve access management

Strategies:

- Implement Rochester Road Access Management Plan between Big Beaver and Wattles Road
- Support lot consolidation
- Require consistent building and parking location placement

3. Preserve adjacent residential character and encourage compatible development

Strategies:

- Provide rear setback and landscape buffers between Rochester Road frontage parcel and adjacent residential properties

Priority and Strategy Interconnection: *These priorities and their strategies are not mutually exclusive; rather they reinforce each other and together they have the ability to attract users and spark investment, and ultimately achieve these aims of vibrancy, identity, and walkability.*

Priority 1: Enhance image and identity through private investment and public/private partnerships

Rochester Road offers a different kind of retail environment, one that is focused on neighborhood service and affordable to small businesses. Despite recent improvements to the right-of-way, Rochester Road lacks a unified identity and cohesion. Excessive signage and outdated strip malls result in the corridor feeling visually cluttered. Updating existing buildings, eliminating blight, and creating a cohesive streetscape will require financial incentives, comprehensive planning, and coordinated public and private investment. However, with targeted interventions and plan implementation the corridor can elevate the aesthetic quality of the area and embrace its green corridor identity.

Renovating commercial storefronts and addressing code violations will enhance the corridor's appearance and economic strength.



Rochester Road Image and Identity



Priority 1: Enhance image and identity through private investment and public/private partnerships

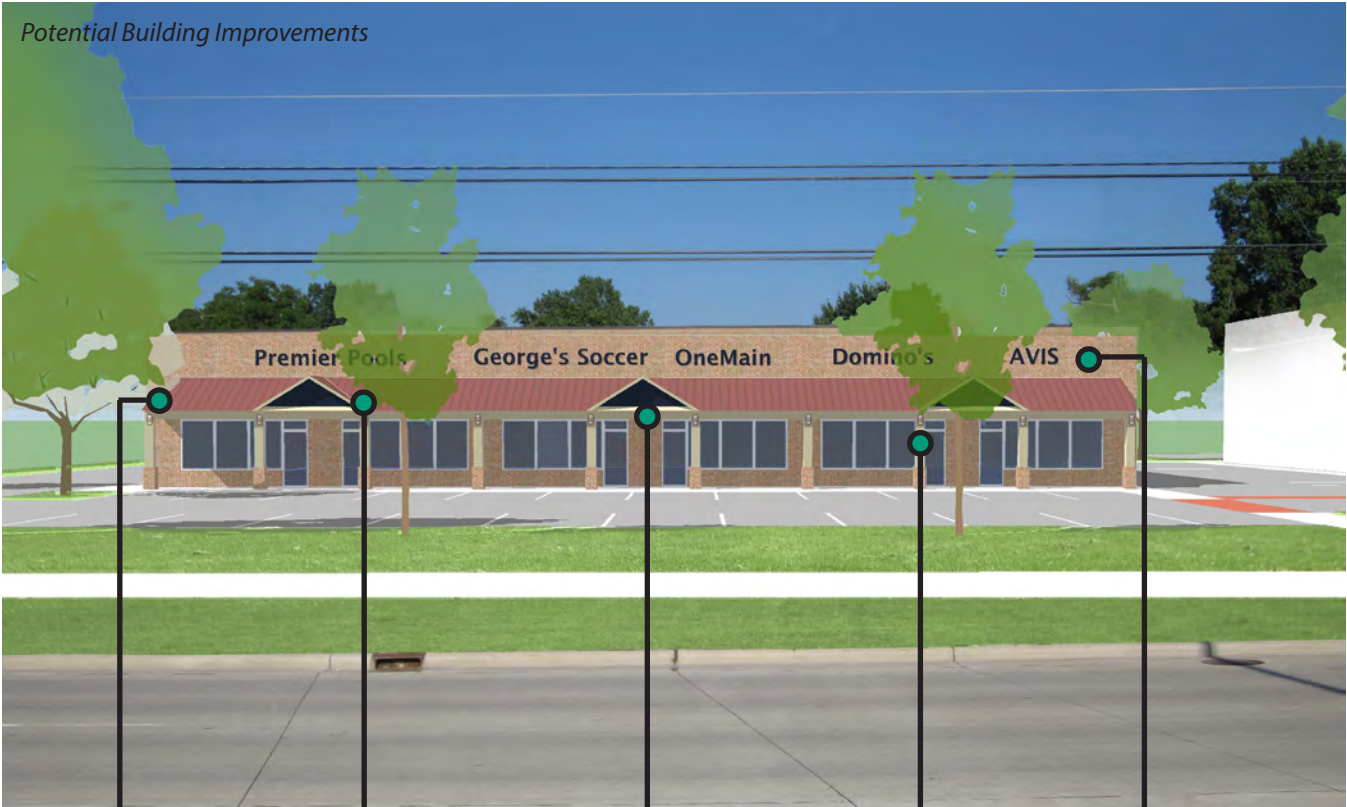
Strategy: Develop Design Guidelines

The City has made a significant investment in the public portion of Rochester Road and private development should reflect that high quality investment. Design guidelines will facilitate the phased redevelopment of the corridor. These standards are a paradigm shift - from customary single use zoning and automobile oriented development patterns to development decisions focused on building placement, integrated use, universal access, and pedestrian amenities. The fundamental element of the Design Guidelines is the relationship of the building to the street which includes building mass, site access, parking arrangement, and treatment of the pedestrian realm.

It is important the design guidelines be crafted to encourage quality design while not reducing development incentives.

Strategy: Establish building improvement programs

Many of the commercial buildings along Rochester Road are over 30 years old, including a few structures built in the 1950s and 60s. Establishing a façade improvement grant program will provide the necessary incentive and guidance to update and enhance tired exteriors. Increased focus on beautification and code enforcement is necessary, and can be promoted through social media and neighborhood groups. Even the newer buildings constructed in the last 10 years will benefit from formal design guidelines.



- New awning
- High quality materials
- Architectural details
- New light fixtures
- Consistent signage

Priority 1: Enhance image and identity through private investment and public/private partnerships

Strategy: Coordinate streetscape improvements

Streetscape elements can identify an area as a special and distinct place for residents, shoppers, visitors, and employees. The City should establish a conceptual Streetscape Plan that sets recommended standards for landscaping, signage, lighting, sidewalks, intersections and access. The Rochester Road streetscape should provide:

- A defined edge between the pedestrian and automobile areas
- A unified relationship between the public/pedestrian realm and private domain
- The use of street trees and landscaping, furniture, paving, lighting, and other streetscape elements
- Attractive street lighting that reinforces the corridor image and minimizes extraneous light

Streetscape may occur corridor wide or occur as redevelopment does.

Strategy: Encourage innovative stormwater management

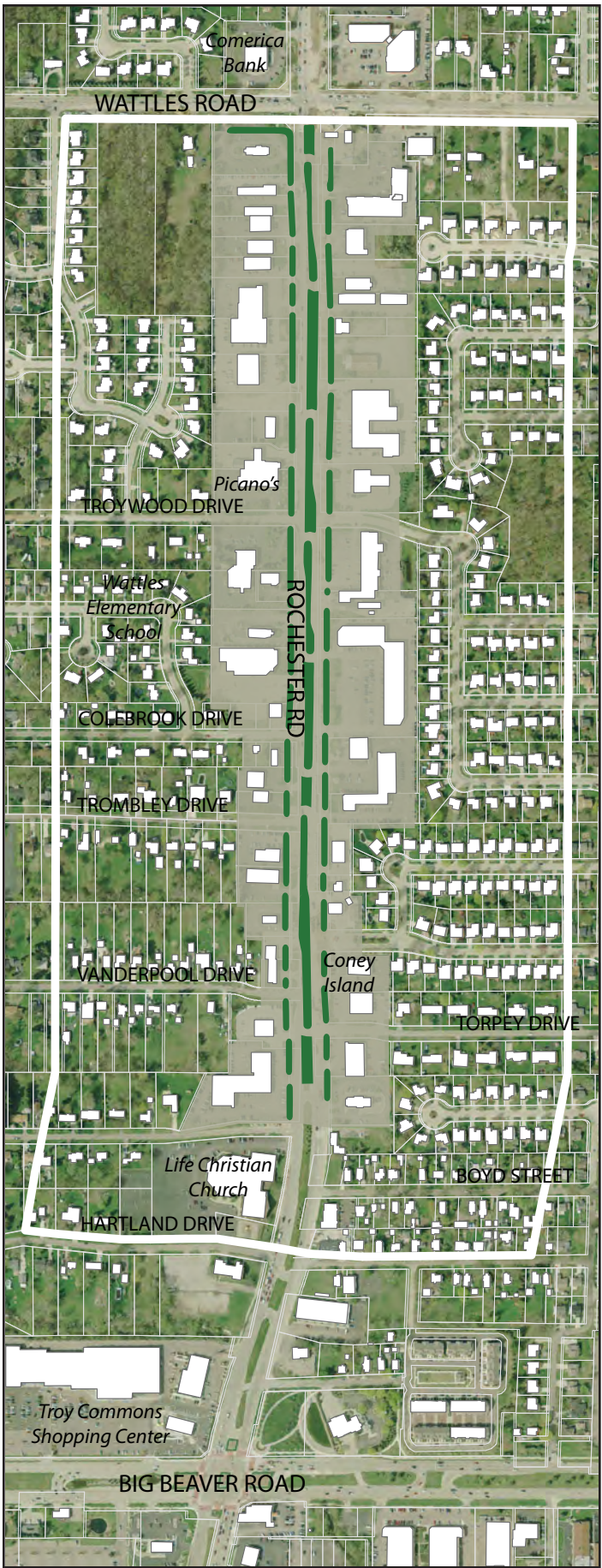
The 2008 plan identified Rochester Road as a green corridor as this section of the corridor is intersected by the Shanahan and Lane Drains. Use of green infrastructure in coordination with infrastructure and nonstructural stormwater best management practices (BMP) should be incorporated. New development should protect natural flow pathways and reduce impervious surfaces. The Plan encourages installing rain gardens, vegetated filter, pervious pavement, vegetated roof, and native plants. Project considerations should include land use, runoff quality, site factors, costs, construction coordination, and maintenance issues. Property owners should reference the Low Impact Development (LID) Manual for Michigan produced by SEMCOG.



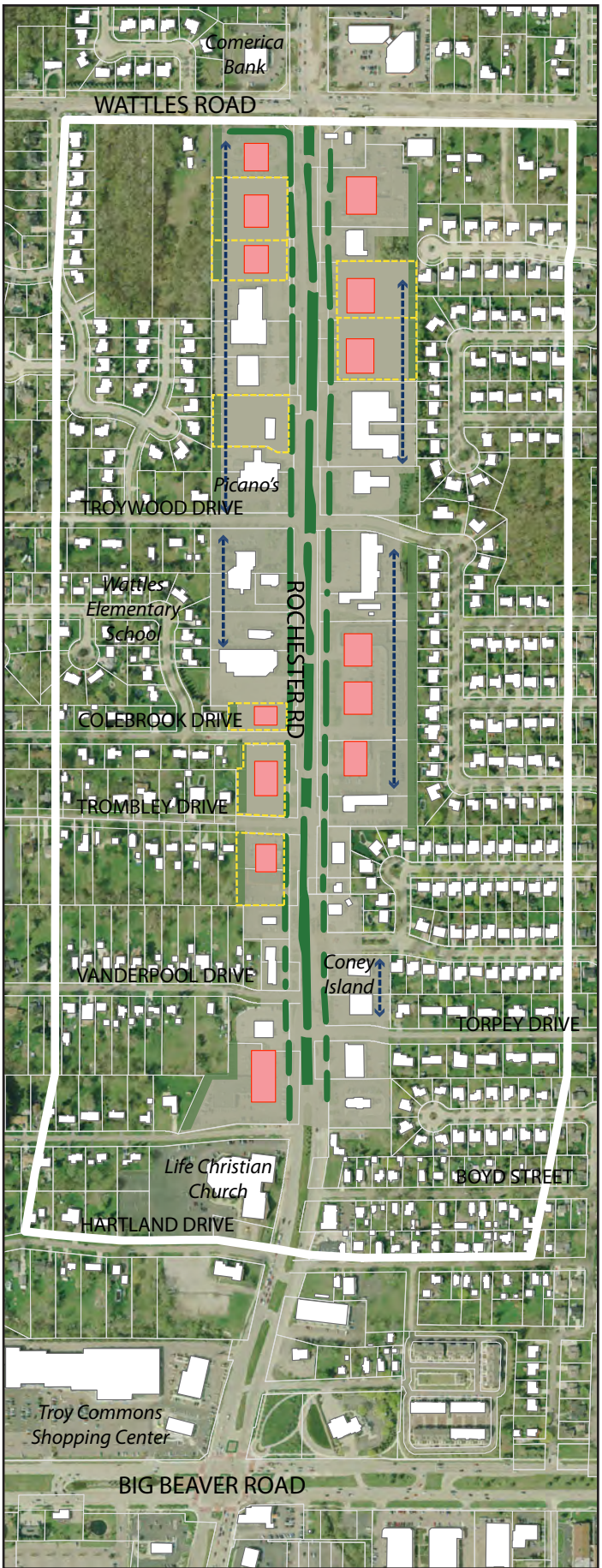
Cross Access	Buffering between Land Uses	Pedestrian Connections	Building Form	Streetscape	Stormwater Management	Parking Lot Landscaping
Provides vehicular access between adjacent sites in order to create a safer pedestrian and automobile environment by reducing the need for multiple site curb cuts.	Development edges should provide a transition to adjacent parcels.	Properly designed sidewalks and crosswalks that provide internal and external site connections to adjacent parcels and the Rochester Road public sidewalk.	Building form and design should result in an integrated and high quality development. The building massing and material should be complementary of context and enrich the corridor environment.	Streetscape amenities such as decorative lighting, special pavers, bollards, trash cans, and benches can enhance an area's pedestrian environment and commercial viability.	New development should incorporate stormwater management best practices, including Low Impact Development (LID).	Parking should be conveniently provided but located behind buildings and screened with necessary landscape and design elements.

Priority 2: Improve site access and building orientation

Drivers often experience difficulty entering and exiting sites along Rochester Road. Curb cuts and inconsistent setbacks also deter pedestrian and non-motorized traffic. Access management along Rochester Road is necessary to ensure roadway safety and efficient operations while providing reasonable access to the adjacent land uses. Eliminating driveway redundancy and establishing consistent building placement and parking locations actually increase business access and visibility, and also create a safer, more inviting automobile and pedestrian environment.



Existing Conditions



Proposed



Priority 2: Improve site access and building orientation



Building oriented to Rochester Road

Access management is a set of techniques that state and local governments can use to control access to highways, major arterials, and other roadways, increase the capacity of these roads, manage congestion, and reduce crashes.

Source: Federal Highway Administration

Benefits of Access Management:

- Safety – reduces crashes
- Capacity – improves traffic flow
- Walkability/Transit - reduces conflicts
- Aesthetics– increases landscaped areas
- Business Vitality – improves customer ingress/egress
- Preserve Investment – very cost effective

Source: Rochester Road Access Management Plan, 2011

Strategy: Implement Rochester Road Access Management Plan between Big Beaver and Wattles Road

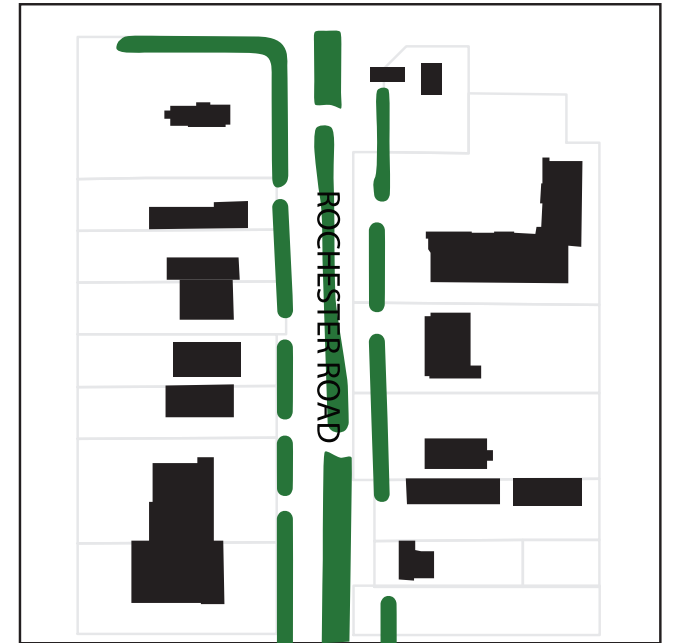
In 2011, the City of Troy participated in the creation of the Rochester Road Access Management Plan along with four other communities, Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG), Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), and Road Commission of Oakland County (RCOC). Based on MDOT's Access Management Guidebook, the Plan recommends improved road design, modified access, increased walking and biking, and coordinated low impact development along the entire corridor. In addition to these overarching principles, the following corridor segment specific recommendations should be implemented for the portion of Rochester Road between Big Beaver and Wattles Road:

- Reduce driveway density by removing 11 of the 38 total existing access points
- Increase visibility of the un-marked bike route crossing at Bishop/Troywood
- Connect properties at the rear with parking lot connections, access easements, or an alley

The City has recently made significant roadway improvements, introducing a boulevard. Recommendations from the Access Management Plan should be implemented as development occurs. The City should also coordinate implementation with other local initiatives, capital improvements, and road construction projects.

Strategy: Support lot consolidation

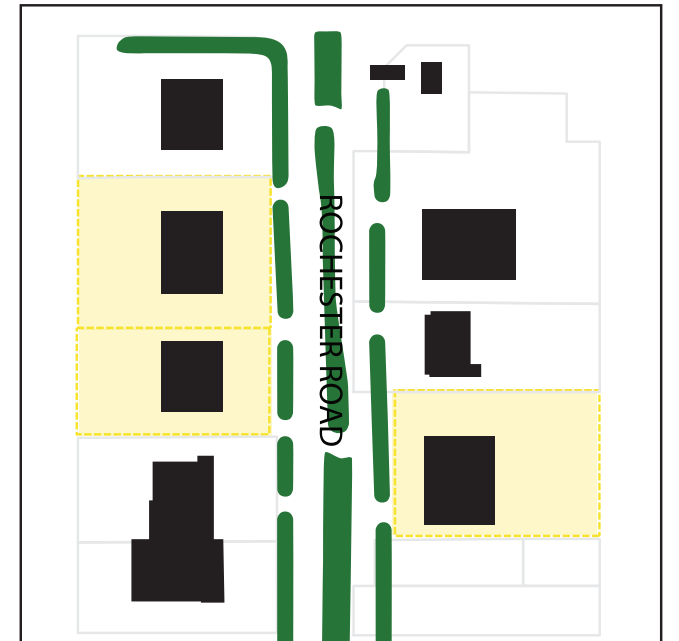
Lot consolidation provides two significant benefits. First, lot consolidation permits the elimination of curb cuts. Reducing curb cuts increases safety for motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians reducing points of vehicular conflict. Secondly, lot consolidation creates larger lots, which permit greater design flexibility and are easier to develop. Contiguous parcels on Rochester Road create challenges for coordinated development and design continuity. Land assembly can work to the advantage of both a developer and property owners. Property owners benefit from increased property values, and developers get a large enough parcel to build on for today's markets.



Existing Conditions

Strategy: Require a consistent building placement and parking location

A consistent building placement and parking location will help improve access management and establish a defined street wall. As noted in the Rochester Road Access Management Plan, some of the buildings are set too close to the right-of-way to allow cross access between properties. On the other hand, the strip retail centers are set back to accommodate parking, providing limited pedestrian connections and little to no landscaping in the parking area. Orientation should avoid overcrowding and allow for functional use of the space between buildings and in the front and rear yards. Parking should not be the dominant visual element on the site; instead the building should provide a welcoming entrance – preferably covered – that provides convenient access to all users.



After Lot Consolidation

A street wall is formed when buildings front onto a street with consistent setbacks. The placement, scale and design quality of the building's street wall determine the character of the streetscape and reinforce pedestrian objectives.

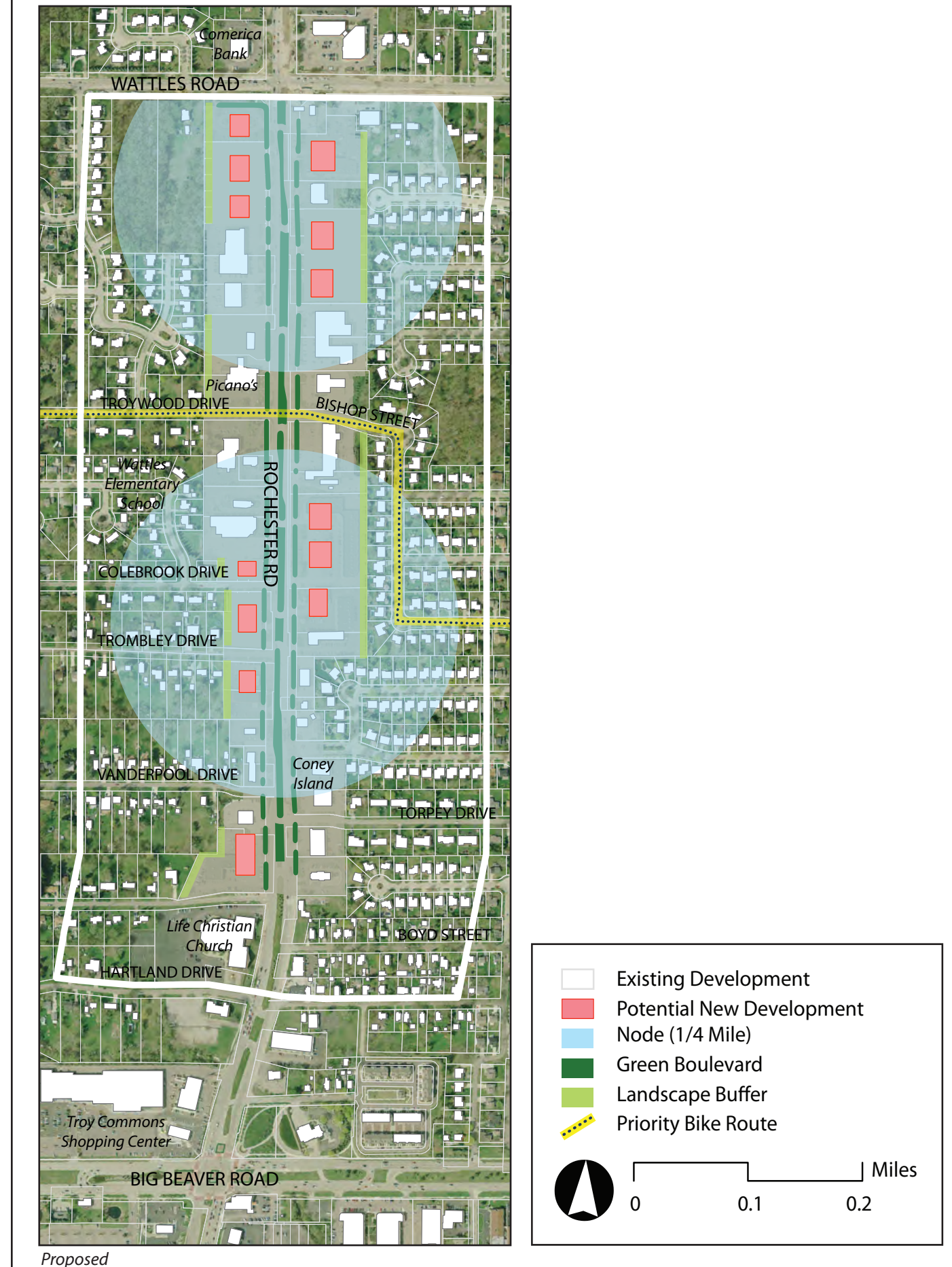
Priority 3: Preserve adjacent residential character and encourage compatible development

Rochester Road functions as a link, connecting the single family neighborhoods to the larger commercial corridors and regional highways. This function presents both an opportunity and a challenge for the corridor. Redevelopment along Rochester Road must respond to a range of land use patterns and existing conditions.

A tenet of both the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance is the protection of residential properties. Balancing development priorities and surrounding neighborhood character will be vital to the success and health of the corridor. Senior housing, casual dining, professional office, and neighborhood services are some of the desirable uses for this community. Mixing uses, horizontally and vertically, will also provide for a more walkable and vibrant area. Too much flexibility can appear inconsistent at times, so establishing clear regulations on building form and use is essential. Many of the commercial properties are outdated, particularly the strip retail stores. These larger sites and, through lot consolidation, the properties near the Wattles intersection offer great potential for redevelopment.



Existing Conditions



Proposed

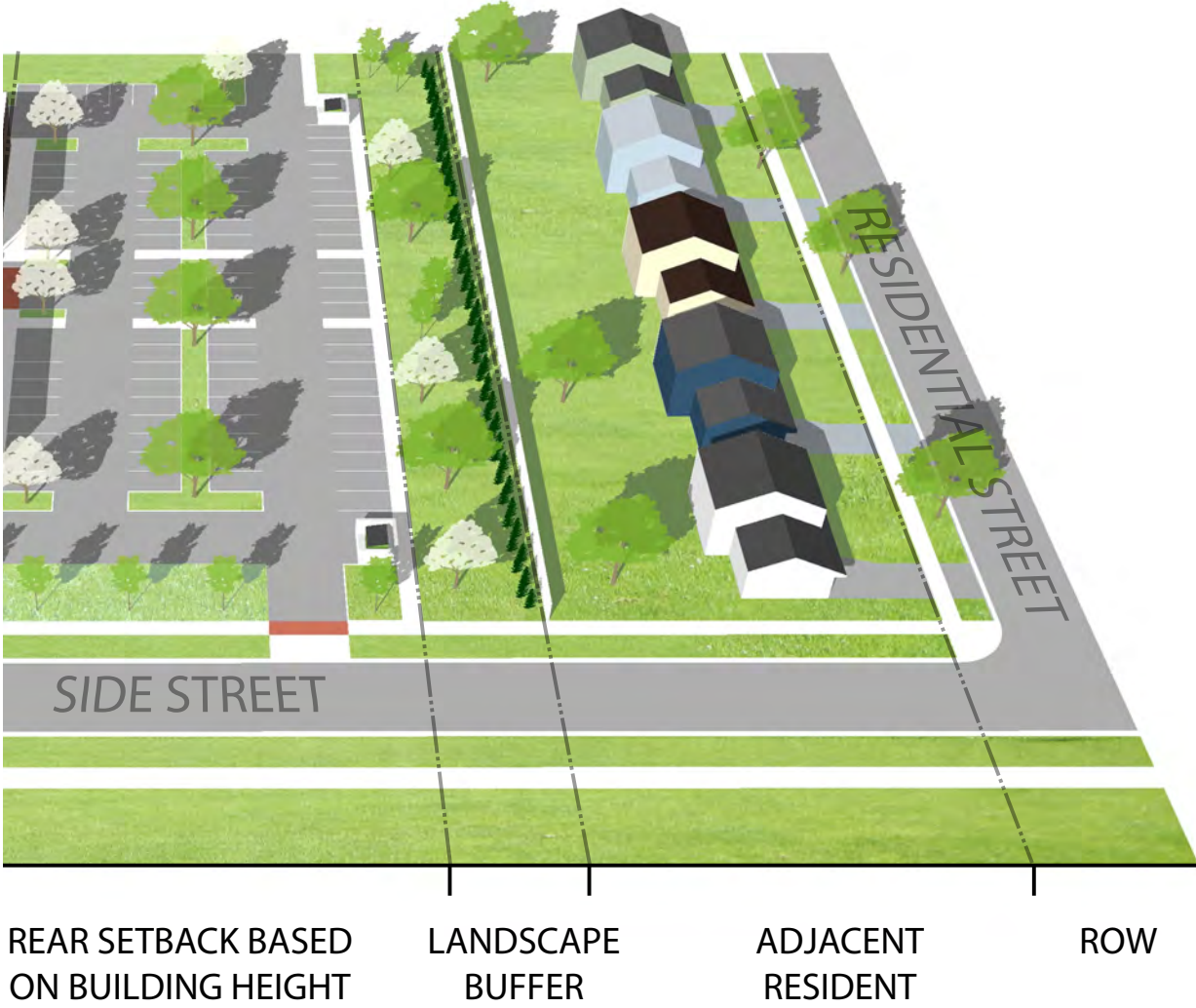
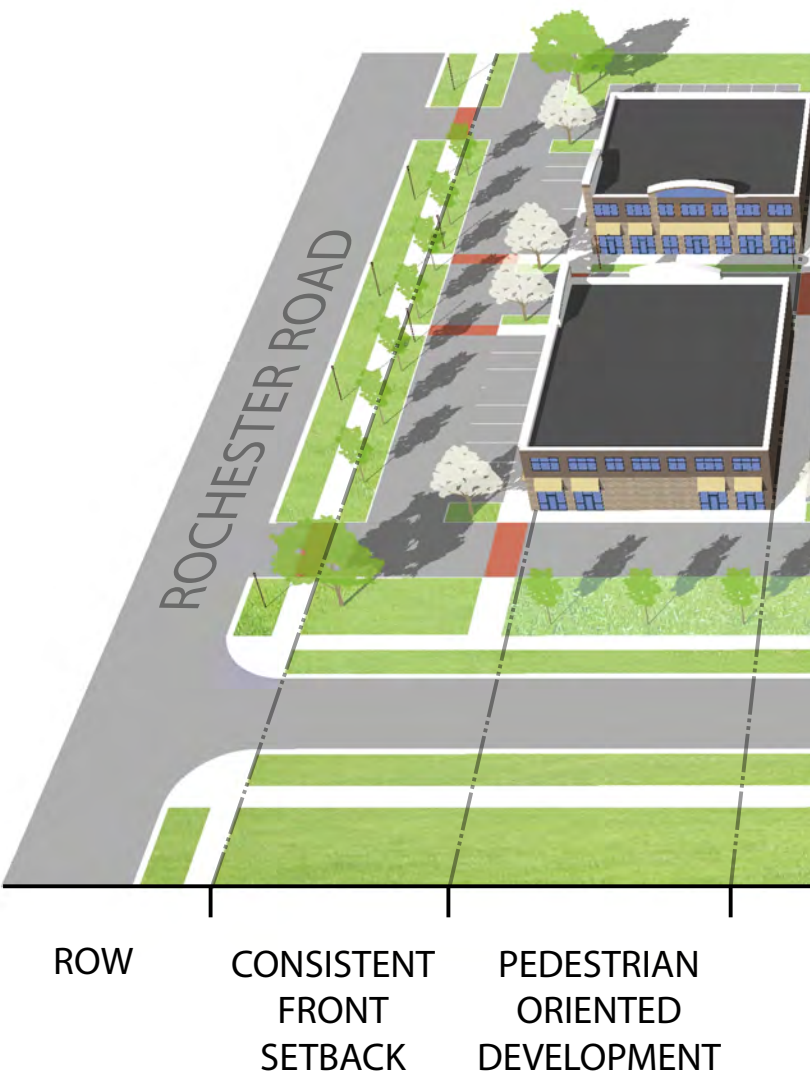
Priority 3: Preserve adjacent residential character and encourage compatible development

Strategy: Provide buffer and landscape between Rochester Road frontage parcel and adjacent residential properties.

Shallow parcel depth along Rochester Road is a constraint on site design. Parcels range in size from 90 to 300 feet deep, with frontages ranging from 60 to 460 feet. In order to protect residential properties, additional buffers and transitions should be applied for commercial and industrial developments adjacent to residential uses. The buffers can be in the form of setbacks, greenbelts, and increased landscape requirements.



Transition between Commercial Uses and Residential Uses



Action Plan and Implementation

The Rochester Road Plan is organized into multiple projects so the vision can be refined and implemented in phases over time in a flexible manner. Priority transformative projects like the streetscape projects and facade improvement programs entail multiple phases given their scale and ambition and serve as economic catalysts enhancing the image of the corridor. The timeframe to implement the Plan will depend on many factors, including market conditions, financing, approvals, and other city initiatives.

Phasing
Near 1-2 years
Mid 3-5 years
Long 6-10 years

<div>Priority 1</div> <div>Enhance the image and identity through private investment and public/private partnerships</div>	Strategy	Actions	Phasing	Responsibility
	Design Guidelines	Develop and adopt Design Guidelines	Near	City
		Incorporate Design Guidelines into Zoning Ordinance	Near	City
		Implement Design Guidelines as development occurs	Near/Mid	City, Private entities
	Establish building improvement program	Research building improvement programs and best practices	Mid	City
		Determine managing body and identify program resources and funding	Mid	City
		Adopt criteria from Design Guidelines/Standards	Mid	City
		Develop and implement Building Improvement Program	Mid	City
	Coordinate streetscape improvements	Develop Rochester Road Streetscape Plan	Near	City
		Implement Streetscape Plan comprehensively or as development occurs	Near/Mid	City, Private entities
<div>Priority 2</div> <div>Improve access management</div>	Encourage innovative stormwater management	Develop Rochester Road Stormwater Plan	Near	City
		Implement Stormwater Plan comprehensively or as development occurs	Mid	City, Private entities
	Strategy	Actions	Phasing	Responsibility
	Implement Rochester Road Access Management Plan between Big Beaver and Wattles Road	Eliminate identified access points as development occurs	Near	City, Private entities
		Create parking connections as development occurs	Near	City
		Improve crossing safety for bicycles at Troywood/Bishop	Near	City
	Support lot consolidation	Create Rochester Road Overlay or amend Community Business (CB) and General Business (GB) District zoning regulations	Near	City
		Encourage/require lot consolidation as development occurs	Near	City
	Require a consistent building placement and parking location	Create Rochester Road Overlay or amend CB and GB zoning regulations	Near	City
<div>Priority 3</div> <div>Protect adjacent residential</div>	Strategy	Actions	Phasing	Responsibility
	Provide buffer and landscape between Rochester Road frontage parcel and adjacent residential properties	Create Rochester Road Overlay or amend CB and GB zoning regulations	Near	City